

IN JANUARY 1988 SOUTHWEST LEADERS came together and crafted our Mission Statement. That statement serves us well—and represents the foundation for who we are as a Company. Later came a Vision to give America the Freedom to Fly. But what happens when you achieve your goal? What then?

We had achieved our previous goal of giving America the Freedom to Fly. We did it. The skies have been liberated. Today, three out of every four Americans have flown at least once in their life. A figure that has tripled since the start of Southwest Airlines.

Never wanting to rest on our laurels, it was time to set a new Vision for the future of Southwest Airlines. Our future. Nearly 25 years later, in January 2013, our Southwest Leaders once again gathered to solidify our Company's Purpose and our Vision.

The phrases in our Purpose and Vision may seem new—but the core of what they mean is as enduring as our red bellies. Knowing our Purpose is vital, especially as we seek to serve new destinations, win new Customers, and expand our boundaries. Our compass will always point "Southwest." We are a Company devoted to our Employees, dedicated to our Customers, and determined to provide a good return to our Shareholders. But how do we bring that to life?

OUR PURPOSE: Why do we exist?

In considering our Purpose, it answers for us WHY we exist. Why do we get up in the morning? Why does our work really matter? What can we do that no one else can?

We exist to connect People to what's important in their lives through friendly, reliable, and low-cost air travel.

As Gary said at the Message to the Field: "In the midst of all the change—in the world, in our industry, and in our Company—one can get confused. I suppose that's understandable. Unlike many companies, though, Southwest's Purpose is very clear. We exist to connect people to what's important in their lives through friendly, reliable, and low-cost air travel. That was true in 1971. It is true now. And, it has been true at every point in between. ... It was the Greek philosopher Aristotle who said, 'Where your talents and the needs of the world cross, there lies your calling.' Our talent is friendly, reliable, and low-cost air travel. And, the world needs us—especially during difficult times. The gift that we can offer is our Servant's Hearts—humanity, compassion, empathy."

Other airlines can claim to connect people—but ONLY Southwest Airlines can do it with friendly, reliable, AND low-cost air travel. The magic is in the "and." We provide a unique combination, and our People are the secret to delivering on our one-of-a-kind brand.

OUR VISION: What do we aspire to be?

Our Vision casts a dream for the future. What do we want to achieve that is audacious, ambitious, and aspirational? Where are we headed?

Our Vision is to become the World's Most Loved, Most Flown, and Most Profitable Airline.

For years we've been honored as one of Fortune magazine's most admired Companies in the world—all while serving one country on the map. What happens when we challenge our borders? When we set new horizons? When we set out to introduce the People of the world to the People of Southwest Airlines?

